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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/865,476	05/29/2001	Takahiko Iriyama	VX012307	3516

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EXAMINER

SHEEHAN, JOHN P

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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1742

DATE MAILED: 09/03/2002

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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

1.P

Offic Action Summary	Application N .	Applicant(s)
	09/865,476	IRIYAMA ET AL.
	Examiner	Art Unit
	John P. Sheehan	1742

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 26 July 2002.
- 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-20 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 9-13, 19 and 20 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 1-8 and 14-18 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) approved b) disapproved by the Examiner.
If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
a) The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____.
- 4) Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____.
- 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

1. Applicant's election without traverse of Group I, product claims 1 to 8 and 14 to 18 in Paper No. 4 is acknowledged.

Priority

2. Receipt is acknowledged of papers submitted under 35 U.S.C. 119(a)-(d), which papers have been placed of record in the file.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

3. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.
4. Claims 1 to 8 and 14 to 18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

I: Claims 1 to 8 and 14 to 18 are indefinite in view of the use of the word "type" (see claim 1, line 8 and each of claims 2 and 3, line 9), MPEP 2173.05(b) (under heading, (e) Type).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

5. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

6. Claims 1 to 8 and 14 to 18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Funkuno et al. (Funkuno, US Patent No. 5,916,376).

Funkuno teaches an Sm-Fe-N alloy having a $TbCu_7$ structure (column 3, line 10) and having a composition that overlaps the alloy composition recited in the instant claims (column 2, lines 26 to 35). Funkuno teaches that the alloy is made by melt spinning a melt of the alloy and nitriding (column 2, lines 40 to 50 and column 10, lines 15 to 20). Funkuno teaches that the nitrided material is pulverized into a powder and mixed with a binder to form a bonded magnet (column 10, lines 28 to 35). Funkuno teaches specific examples wherein the thickness of the particles is within the 10 to 40 microns as recited in the instant claims (for example see, column 11, Table 1).

The claims and Funkuno differ in that Funkuno does not teach the exact same proportions as recited in applicants' claims.

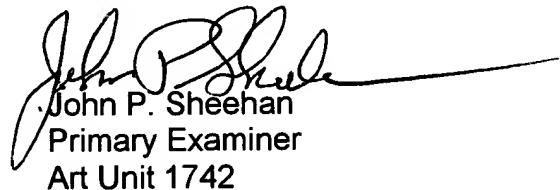
However, one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made would have considered the invention to have been obvious because the alloys taught by Funkuno overlap applicants' claimed alloys and therefore are considered to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness, *In re Malagari*, 182 USPQ 549 and MPEP 2144.05.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to John P. Sheehan whose telephone number is (703) 308-3861. The examiner can normally be reached on T-F (6:30-5:00) Second Monday Off.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Roy King can be reached on (703) 308-1146. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are (703) 872-9310 for regular communications and (703) 872-9311 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-0651.



John P. Sheehan
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 1742

jps
August 31, 2002